

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05

PC-01 SCCT-01 SY-05 EUR-12 SR-02 ORM-01 HEW-02 /080 W

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P 180532Z MAR 75

FM AMCONSUL ASMARA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3274

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L ASMARA 0344

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS SWEL ET

SUBJ: MEDICAL SITUATION IN ERITREA

REF: A) ASMARA 340; B) ASMARA 215

1. ON 12 MARCH, LOCAL SOURCE WHO IS ELF SYMPATHIZER, REQUESTED ASSISTANCE FROM CONS OFF IN OBTAINING MEDICAL SUPPLIES FOR THE ELF TO TREAT THEMSELVES AND VILLAGERS WHO HAVE BEEN AFFECTED BY THE WAR. CONS OFF REPLIED SUCH ASSISTANCE WOULD BE IMPRUDENT AT THIS TIME, AND SUGGESTED HE TRY TO BUY SUPPLIES FROM LOCAL PHARMACIES. SOURCE EXPLAINED DIFFICULTIES WITH LOCAL BULK PURCHASES, AND PRODUCED LIST OF REQUIRED ITEMS. MANY OF THE ITEMS ARE THOSE COMMONLY FOUND IN FIRST AID KITS.

2. ON 13 MARCH, AMER REP OF AMERICAN EVANGELICAL MISSION LOCATED IN GHINDA, TOLD CONS OFF PURCHASES OF PHARMCEUTICAL SUPPLIES FOR THE HOSPITAL IN GHINDA REQUIRED APPROVAL BY OFFICE OF CHIEF ADMINISTRATOR OF ERITREA.

3. ON 15 MARCH, DR GHIRMAI BERHE, DIR GEN FOR PUBLIC HEALTH IN ERITREA, TOLD CONS OFF THAT HE WAS CONCERNED THAT SOLDIERS MAY COME INTO ITEGUE MENON HOSPITAL IN SEARCH OF PATIENTS, STAFF OR REFUGEES, WHO SOLDIERS BELIEVE TO BE ELF MEMBERS OR SYMPATHIZERS. ON 17 MARCH CONS OFF ASKED DR GHIRMAI FOR LIST OF ANY MEDICAL

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SUPPLIES HE NEEDED THAT THE CON GEN COULD ASSIST IN OBTAINING.

HE REPLIED THAT HE HAD RECEIVED 75 PERCENT OF THE SURGICAL INSTRUMENTS REQUESTED IN ASMARA 215, AND THAT NOW THEY WERE MAKING A SURVEY OF FUTURE NEEDS. ON 17 MARCH DR VINYARD, USG CONTRACT PHYSICIAN, TOLD CONS OFF THAT ON 15 MARCH DR GHIRMAI HAD DECLINED TO ACCEPT OFFER OF DPT VACINE, GOOD ONLY FOR CHILDREN, AND CHOLERA AND RABIES THAT IS EXCESS TO NEED OF AMER COMMUNITY. DR GHIRMAI SAID THEY DID NOT NEED IT, EVEN THOUGH THEY DID NOT HAVE ANY THREE WEEKS AGO. DR VINYARD BELIEVES THAT THE TWO CIVILIAN SURGEONS IN ASMARA WOULD BE HARD PRESSED TO HANDLE THE CASE LOAD IF THERE WERE A REPEAT OF THE CASUALTIES THAT OCCURRED DURING FIRST WEEK OF FEBRUARY.

4. COMMENT: DR GHIRMAI IMPRESSED CONS OFF AS BEING SO CONCERNED ABOUT HIS OWN SURVIVAL, THAT HE IS RELUCTANT TO REQUEST ASSISTANCE, THRU AMERICAN CHANNELS, EVEN IF IT IS NEEDED. THUS THE CONGEN IS FACED WITH THE DILEMMA OF WHAT TO DO OF A HUMANITARIAN NATURE WHEN THE DIR GEN OF PUBLIC HEALTH IN ERITREA IS RELUCTANT TO ACCEPT ASSISTANCE AND A PRIVATE CITIZEN HAS DIRECTLY REQUESTED HELP FOR VILLAGERS AND MEMBERS OF THE ELF NOT SERVICED BY PUBLIC HEALTH FACILITIES. IN ORDER HELP DISCOURAGE RETALIATION AGAINST USG PERSONNEL IN ASMARA, REQUEST CONGEN BE AUTHORIZED AND ASSISTED BY EMBASEY IN GIVING POSITIVE REPLY TO REQUEST FOR MEDICAL ASSISTANCE.

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## Message Attributes

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